

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace the paragraph on Pages 1, lines 7 - 14 with the following marked-up replacement paragraph:

-- This application claims the benefit of Provisional Application Serial Number 60/459,770, filed April 2, 2003, the entire disclosure of which is hereby incorporated herein by reference. The present invention is related to commonly-assigned U. S. Patents _____ (serial number 10/_____), entitled Patent Application Serial Number 10/439,573, entitled "Designing Information Technology Products", _____ (serial number 10/_____), entitled Products"; Patent Application Serial Number 10/439,570, entitled "Information Technology Portfolio Management", and _____ (serial number 10/_____), entitled Management"; and U. S. Patent Application Serial Number 10/439,569, entitled "Identifying Platform Enablement Issues for Information Technology Products", which were filed concurrently herewith on May 16, 2003 and which are hereby incorporated herein by reference. --

Please replace the paragraph on Page 15, lines 5 - 17 with the following marked-up replacement paragraph:

-- Preferably, a scale of 1 to 5 is used for measuring each of the attributes during the assessment process. In this manner, relative degrees of support (or non-support) can be indicated. In the examples used herein, a value of 5 indicates the best case, and 1 represents the worst case. In preferred embodiments, textual descriptions are provided for each numeric value of each attribute. These textual descriptions are designed to assist product assessors in performing an objective, rather than subjective, assessment. Preferably, the textual descriptions

are defined so that a product being assessed will receive a score of 3 on an attribute if the product meets the market's expectation for that attribute, a score of 4 if the product ~~exceed~~ exceeds expectations, and a score of 5 if the product greatly exceeds expectations or sets new precedent for how the attribute is reflected in the product. On the other hand, the descriptions preferably indicate that a product that meets some aspect of an attribute (but fails to completely meet expectations) will receive a score of 2 for that attribute, and a product that obviously fails to meet expectations for the attribute (or is considered obsolete with reference to the attribute) will receive a score of 1. --

Please replace the paragraph on Page 20, lines 9 - 18 with the following marked-up replacement paragraph:

-- When the product reaches the planning checkpoint, plan information is preferably used to conduct an initial assessment. This initial assessment is preferably conducted by the offering team, as a self-assessment, using the same criteria and attributes (and the same textual descriptions of how values will be assigned) as will be used by the product assessment team later on. See element 510. The offering team preferably uses its product plans (e.g., the planned product features) as a basis for this self-assessment. Typically, performing an assessment while an IT product is still in the planning phase will prove quite valuable for guiding a product plan. [[Plans]] Plan items can be selected from among the candidates, and the subsequent development effort can then focus its efforts, in view of how this product (plan) assessment indicates that the wants and needs of the target marketplace will be met. --

Please replace the paragraph on Page 23, lines 5 - 18 with the following marked-up replacement paragraph:

-- A product assessment is preferably scheduled (Block 635), and is subsequently carried out (Block 640). Performing the assessment preferably comprises conducting an inspection of the product, when carried out during the development phase, or of the product plan, when carried out in the planning phase. When the operational product (or an interim version thereof) is available, this inspection preferably includes simulating a “first-use” experience, whereby an independent team or party (i.e., someone other than a development team member) receives the product in a package similar to its intended delivery package (that is, some number of ~~CR-ROMs~~ CD-ROMs or other storage media, or download instructions, etc.) and then installs the product and begins to use it. (Note that when an assessment is performed using an interim version of a product, the scores that are assigned for the various attributes preferably consider any differences that will exist between the interim version and the final version, to the extent that such differences are known. Preferably, the product team provides detailed information on such differences to the product assessment team. If no operational code is available, then the inspection may be performed by review of code or similar documentation.) --

Please replace the paragraph that begins on Page 24, line 14 and carries over to Page 25, line 4 with the following marked-up replacement paragraph:

-- According to preferred embodiments, any measurement attributes for which the assigned value is 1 or 2 ~~requires~~ require follow-up action by the product team, as these are not considered acceptable values. Thus, attributes receiving these values are preferably flagged or

otherwise indicated in the assessment workbook. Preferred embodiments also require an overall score of at least 70 percent, at a minimum, and any product scoring lower than 70 percent requires review of its assessment attributes and improvement before being approved for delivery to customers. Optionally, selected attributes may be designated as critical or imperative for acceptance in the target marketplace. In this case, even though a product's overall assessment score exceeds the minimum acceptable value, if it scores a 1 or 2 on a critical attribute, then review and improvement is required on these scores before the product can be approved. --

Please replace the paragraph that begins on Page 26, line 17 and carries over to Page 27, line 10 with the following marked-up replacement paragraph:

-- Optionally, a special designation may be granted to the product when the test in Block 690 has a positive result. This designation may be used, for example, in the product's marketing materials, indicating that this product has passed the assessment criteria. Thus, a product that fails to meet the minimum product assessment score may still be delivered to the marketplace, but without the special designation. When using this type of special designation, a subset of an IT developer's products may receive such designations, and these products may be used for purposes of comparison or when assessing newly-developed products. For example, one of these previously-assessed products may be used in the role of a competing product, as shown at elements 311 or 312 of Fig. 3, and/or for purposes of determining the newly-developed product's ease of integration with existing products. Furthermore, the test performed at Block [[620]] 625 of Fig. 6 may be made with reference to whether the product's basic product information indicates that this product is a candidate for receiving the special

designation, and the decisions made at Block 670 and 690 may be made with reference to whether this product remains a candidate for, and should receive, respectively, the special designation. --

Please replace the paragraph that begins on Page 31, line 10 and carries over to Page 32, line 6 with the following marked-up replacement paragraph:

-- The criteria and attributes that were defined for assessing an IT product's acceptance by the mid-market, and extensions of these attributes, have been evaluated with reference to these autonomic computing characteristics. Fig. 11 provides a chart 1100 showing how attributes from the Easy to Install, Easy to Manage, Easy to Integrate, Easy to Learn and Use, and Extensible and Flexible criteria may be mapped to the autonomic computing characteristics. Optionally, a product's support for autonomic computing characteristics can be factored into the assessment of how well the product meets the wants and needs of its target marketplace by reflecting the autonomic computing characteristics in the textual descriptions that are used for assigning values to one or more of the measurement attributes. This will now be described with reference to the mapping in Fig. 11. As shown therein with reference to the Easy to Install criterion, if an IT product can be installed and operated with minimal skill and interaction, then the product can be considered as meeting requirements for the self-configuring characteristic. See element 1110. (Note that the description for "self-configuring" in row 1110 aligns somewhat more closely with the "Easy to Manage" criterion definition in Fig. 1, as opposed to the "Easy to Install" criterion. This illustrates that one implementation of the related invention may arrange the attributes differently than another implementation, if desired. For

example, one or more attributes from the “Easy to Install” criterion may be moved to the “Easy to Manage” criterion.) --

Please replace the paragraph that begins on Page 35, line 18 and carries over to Page 36, line 3 with the following marked-up replacement paragraph:

-- While preferred embodiments of the present invention have been described, additional variations and modifications in those embodiments may occur to those skilled in the art once they learn of the basic inventive concepts. Therefore, it is intended that the appended claims shall be construed to include [[both]] the preferred embodiment embodiments and all such variations and modifications as fall within the spirit and scope of the invention. --